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JAMES GORDON BENNETT.

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Volume XXIX..... No. 23

AMUSEMENTS TO-MORROW EVENING.

NIBLO'S GARDEN, Broadway.—CONNIE SUGAR.

WALLACE'S THEATRE, Broadway.—ROSEDALE.

WINTER GARDEN, Broadway.—TICKET OF LEAVE.

OLYMPIC THEATRE, Broadway.—A BULL IN A CHINA SHOP.—MARETTA.

NEW BOWERY THEATRE, Bowery.—MARETTA.

BOHEMIA THEATRE, Bowery.—MARETTA.

BARNUM'S MUSEUM, Broadway.—FRENCH GIANTS.

GRAND OPERA HOUSE, 24th St.—CAMILLO'S OPERA.

BRITISH MINSTREL, Mechanics' Hall, 47 Broadway.—BRITISH MINSTREL.

WOOD'S MINSTREL HALL, 614 Broadway.—BRITISH MINSTREL.

AMERICAN THEATRE, No. 44 Broadway.—BALLOON.

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to be presumed that the same obstruction has retarded the course of the other six steamers.

The steamer Saladin, from Kingston, Jamaica, on the 6th inst., and Port-au-Prince on the 8th, arrived at this port yesterday, after a tedious and boisterous passage. On her way to New York she broke a portion of her machinery, and had to make port of her way under sail. She brings no news of particular importance. The *Mercantile Intelligence* of the 6th of January says:—The recent transactions in business here have been very limited in extent, being confined, with few exceptions, to demands for immediate consumption. There have been large arrivals of American provisions and breadstuffs, and the excessive stocks have unsettled the market, the trade being apparently unwilling to operate to any extent. There is, however, a general feeling among the importers that in a short time the present prevailing dullness, naturally succeeding the stir for the holidays, will have passed off, and business will become more active. Great excitement has been created in the island by the arrival of several American traction engines, which run over the roughest roads without rails of any kind. In a trip from Kingston to St. Andrew, a distance of seven or eight miles, on an inclined plane, the performance of one of these engines gave universal and complete satisfaction. This is a new era for the island.

The Surrogate yesterday settled the accounts of Richard Morrill's estate; also of Thomas McCreary's estate. The injunction against the executor of Thomas Collier's estate was modified. The money lying in the city treasury belonging to James Gades' estate was ordered paid to his next of kin.

General Edward Ferrero, who commands the First Division of the Ninth army corps, writes from Blaine's Cross Roads, East Tennessee, that he has succeeded in re-enlisting as veterans seven regiments of infantry and two batteries of his command.

A fire occurred about eleven o'clock last evening at No. 192 Chrystie street, occupied as an organ and furniture manufactory. The loss is estimated at about \$7,000, on both workshops and building.

The stock market was steady yesterday, and there was very little deviation from Friday's prices, the bulls and bears having evidently decided to wait until Monday morning for the commencement of new operations. Government securities were firm, and the five-twenty bonds were held at 104½. The seven and three-tenths Treasury notes have advanced to 107½. The gold market was active at an advance in the rate of premium to 107½.

There was general dullness in commercial circles on Saturday, owing to the lower price of gold and the fall in exchange. Prices of most goods were merely nominal, though holders were pretty firm in their views. Transactions were moderate. At the Produce Exchange things were mixed; but there was no special activity in any article—nearly all the business having been at about Friday's prices. Groceries were quiet. Cotton unchanged. Petroleum dull, lower and nominal. Freight quiet.

The Military Incapacity of the Administration.

For information in relation to the movements of our armies and all the battles that are fought the people look first to the press. But after all have read what the correspondents say there are some few who want to hear the general's account of his own movements, and look somewhat impatiently for his report; for in such documents they expect to see a more particular account of the history of each affair. They expect to see stated, at least, the object that it is proposed to gain by each battle; how it is proposed to gain it, and, withal, an honest recital of the result. And were the reports of generals up to such a standard they would be very interesting and important papers. They would enable the people to judge more clearly than they always can exactly how the administration carries on the war, and what atrocious blunders it continually makes.

But the truth is that such reports are of very little account. They hardly ever tell the people any more than they already knew from the papers, and they are always especially delicate upon the blunders of the War Department. Sometimes a general will point out very cautiously the errors of a rival general whom he hates, or of a subordinate whom he fears; but that is, in the main, the extent of his disclosures. Two prominent generals who might have given the country some very remarkable intelligence in relation to the administrative blunders have never yet given any reports at all of extensive movements made under their direction, and battles fought while they had command. These are Generals Burnside and Hooker. Both of these men fought battles near Fredericksburg, and reports have not yet been received from either as to his campaign. Both blundered terribly; but it is probable that the Washington authorities blundered in those matters even more terribly than the generals did. And when those reports are sent in, if they are written boldly and honestly, they will doubtless disclose one of the most disgraceful chapters of administrative incapacity that the world has ever seen.

There are two marked exceptions to the usual reticence and insipidity of general reports. These are the reports of Generals Halleck and McClellan. Only some inconsiderable portions of General McClellan's report have yet been made public; but those portions are honest and distinct. They show the country just where the blame lies for the continuance of the war to the present time. The people readily contrast what the administration has actually done with what General McClellan proposed to do, and from that contrast they as readily infer the utter incapacity of those who put this able soldier aside to conduct the war on their own plan. In that report the letters of General McClellan to the President and those of the President to Gen. McClellan are given; and in those letters we see the well considered counsel of a far-sighted soldier turned from its purpose by the trashy little epistles constructed upon the model first furnished by Jack Bunsby. "If your plan is better than my plan, then my plan is worse than your plan," says the President chosen to rule over thirty millions of people. "If so be that this ship's gone down," says Jack Bunsby, "why so; but if so be that this ship isn't gone down, why so also." And Jack Bunsby's nonsense is the less nonsensical of the two.

General Halleck's report was crammed from the first line to the last with evidence of the military incapacity of the President. It was almost like a bill for the impeachment of that functionary. Beginning with the first Fredericksburg battle, it threw the whole responsibility of that massacre upon the President. Upon the President also it threw the responsibility for the Chancellorsville slaughter. And a third great disaster—that at Chickamauga—was traced to Burnside's failure to reinforce Rosecrans, and the President was responsible for Burnside. No administration in Europe, and but very few there, could survive three such defeats; and yet our administration is to go on and perhaps repeat all this for us in the present year.

A SUGGESTION FOR CONGRESS.—If Congress really desires to do something to help break up the rebellion, let it pass an act compelling all the property of rebels, except those officers who shall immediately renew their allegiance to the Union, and divide the land thus confiscated among the Southern soldiers who will at once throw up the rebel cause and become loyal men. This would punish the rebel leaders and would give the Southern soldiery some motive for loyalty. Such an act as this would, therefore, be much more effectual than silly proclamations of abolitionism.

THE SLAVERY QUESTION AND THE NEGRO QUESTION.—The irrepressible abolition philosopher of the Tribune calls the attention of its opponents to the following facts—to wit: that slavery is on its last legs in Maryland, and that when it dies in Maryland it dies in Delaware; that West Virginia is "practically relieved of the scourge," and the loyal portions of Old Virginia; that Missouri is on the high road to emancipation; that Arkansas has "renounced the devil and all his works"; that Tennessee will soon be reorganized as a free State, and likewise Louisiana, and that parts of Mississippi, South Carolina and Georgia have replaced slave labor by free labor, and so on; and then the question is asked, "How is all this to be reversed?"

We answer that no time need be wasted in the discussion of this question; that the war has virtually settled it; that the institution of Southern slavery may be considered as a thing of the past; that it is dying, and that with or soon after the suppression of the rebellion it will cease to exist. It is evident that in all the border slave States and in all the States along the Mississippi the war has so completely broken up this institution that peace, under the best possible conditions for the purpose, cannot restore it; and it is equally evident, from rebel confessions, that in South Carolina, Georgia and Alabama the slave population has become so demoralized by the war that, with the return of peace, slavery will be inevitably superseded by some other system of labor.

Hence we consider it a waste of time any longer to discuss the question, what is to be done with this institution of slavery in the reconstruction of the Union? The tree has been torn up by the roots, and cannot be replanted. There are cedars in California which, with a solid trunk of thirty feet in diameter, tower to the amazing height of three hundred feet. It would be as easy to replace and bring to life again one of these giants of the forest, blown down by a violent wind, as to restore this prostrate institution of Southern slavery. Its life is sealed, and we may leave it to its fate.

But the negro question, or the question what is to be done with the black race of the South, begins to loom up as one of the most important issues of the present century to us and to mankind at large. From the lights of experience we think it may be safely asserted that this war has not only uprooted the institution of Southern slavery, but has settled the destiny of the African race in this country. Under the fostering care of a master, the negro works, thrives and multiplies; left to himself, he basks in the sun or sleeps in the shade till he wastes away and dies. With the restoration of peace the blacks of the South under any voluntary system of labor, will thus relapse into African idleness. Destitution and disease will next assail them, and they will be swept off as by a pestilence. At the same time the waste places of the South will invite more efficient laborers from all the Southern States of Europe, and with their appearance numerous vineyards and olive groves among the cotton fields will spring up from South Carolina to Texas. We need not further pursue the subject. Let it suffice the philanthropic abolitionist that his boon of emancipation in the rebellion into which they plunged for an independent slaveholding empire will have resulted in the extinction of slavery.

MR. DRAPER HAS AN EYE ON THE CUSTOM HOUSE.—The patriotism of Mr. Simon Draper has inspired him with the brilliant idea of getting up a President Lincoln association; but from the well known enterprising character of Mr. Draper we guess that he has an eye upon the New York Custom House, and has made up his mind that with the re-election of Old Abe this Lincoln association will advance its founder to the desirable post of honor and profit now held by Hiram Barney. In brief, Mr. Draper is striking for the office of Collector. A similar explanation will apply to the patriotic gentlemen concerned in the Lincoln resolutions of the late New Hampshire Republican State Convention, and to the Lincoln pronunciamento of the republicans of the Pennsylvania Legislature, or we are no judge of the tactics of General Simon Cameron. Of course the bulk of the federal officeholders, contractors, jobbers, &c., are strong in the belief that President Lincoln is entitled to a re-election. But still, as "there is many a slip 'twixt the cup and the lip," it is possible that all these Lincoln movements may be upset in the Republican National Convention. We know that Martin Van Buren was upset at Baltimore in 1844, in spite of a majority to that Convention elected as Van Buren delegates; we know that Henry Clay, under similar circumstances, was superseded at Philadelphia in 1848 by old Zach Taylor; and we know that Mr. Seward, at Chicago, was quite unexpectedly to his supporters, engineered off the track in 1860.

But just to take a single case. If the military popularity of General Taylor was too strong for the great popularity of Henry Clay as a statesman, how much more will the military achievements of General Grant, or even General Fremont, when the time comes, eclipse the statesmanship of Abraham Lincoln. Let Mr. Draper "put this into his pipe and smoke it."

THE PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE CHARTER.—The various plans before the Legislature for tinkering the city charter are, like a multitude of nostrums for a system diseased, alarmingly suggestive of danger. The concern manifested in so many antagonistic quarters about the municipal health reminds one of the anxiety exhibited a few years ago by the European governments about the condition of the sick man of Turkey. There is not one of the political quacks who has taken the matter in hand whose object is not to turn the helpless condition of the patient to account. Their remedies are all of the Sangrado order—the bleeding process being in every case the basis of their prescriptions.

It is absurd to expect that any relief from the present condition of things is to be obtained from legislation at Albany. So long as the committees appointed to consider amendments to the charter are under the immediate influence and control of the political rings there can be but one result. Our city revenues are looked upon by the latter as their legitimate appanage, and such alterations as they may make will have for object only to extend their opportunities of plunder. All this talk about correcting the abuses of our present municipal system is intended not

merely to prevent interference with their operations, but to cover up new schemes of villany.

If the Legislature were really in earnest in the work of reformation it would adopt the plan that we lately recommended to it. For a charter to give satisfaction to the people of New York, it must be the work of those in whom they can place confidence. Let a commission for this purpose be issued to a body composed of such men as William B. Astor, Judge Roosevelt, A. T. Stewart, Peter Cooper, Peletiah Perit, Moses Starnell, Chas. H. Marshall and W. H. Aspinwall, and we will guarantee that the result of their labors will not require remodeling for years to come. It is thus that the work of legislation is effected abroad in difficult and complex questions of this kind. It is certain that no other course of proceeding can ever secure to us a charter which will protect us against the knavery and rapacity of the politicians.

REFORMS IN OUR PUBLIC SCHOOLS.—Whilst the Legislature is in session we trust that it will undertake a revision of the system under which the Board of Education is elected. The startling facts which have been brought to light regarding the constitution of that body have destroyed all confidence in it. The public will not allow things to remain as they are, notwithstanding the show made by the Board of a desire to purge itself of its vicious elements. If the Legislature does not take the matter in hand the community undoubtedly will, by keeping their children from the schools. It will not be tolerated that a few ward politicians, who control the election of these School Commissioners, shall continue to poison the fountain from whence the rising generation are supposed to draw intellectual life and health. Better far that they should remain steeped in ignorance than be brought in contact with the contaminating influences to which, under the present system, they are liable to be exposed. It will be asked in what way these perils are to be avoided. The answer is a very simple one. Let the Legislature give to a commission, composed of the heads of the different churches, the appointment of all the teachers in these schools. There can be joined with them the rector of Columbia College, the Principal of the Free Academy, and such other laymen as may be deemed desirable. With stringent rules for their guidance, to exclude all chance of sectarian differences, the selections of this body could not fail to inspire confidence. If a better plan than this can be suggested we will willingly accept it. We are disposed, in fact, to accede to any change which will take out of the hands of the politicians appointments of such high moral trust and responsibility.

VOLUNTEERING.—NEW JERSEY AND THE BLACK REGIMENTS.—OLD ATTEMPT AT WAR.

Our Jersey neighbors, who are anxious to fill their own quota with their own men, white or black, do not like the idea of agents or brokers bringing men from across the river to this city. There have been several instances of "Americans of African descent" having been stopped at the ferry, and made to fight about face and march in another direction. Right or wrong, it has been the source of occasional trouble and frequent complaints. Among the latter, George Downing, knight of the spoon and lord of the bivalves of Broad street, was seriously aggrieved in this way, and made complaint of his troubles to Mayor Guthrie. His Honor could not exactly see how his jurisdiction extended over Jersey City, where they have a very good Mayor, but, being of a kind and benevolent disposition, and assuming that justice be done, though the lawyers should fail, very considerably recommended George to make application to Supervisor Hunt, Chairman of the Volunteering Committee. Thereupon Mr. Downing appeared before the Chairman and presented the following letter:—

Mayors Office, New York, Jan. 23, 1864.

HON. GEORGE DOWNING.

DEAR SIR:—I have been directed by His Honor the Mayor to refer to you the bearer, Mr. George Downing, son of Thomas Downing, so well known to all the lovers of good things in our city. Mr. Downing has been several instances of "Americans of African descent" having been stopped at the ferry, and made to fight about face and march in another direction. Right or wrong, it has been the source of occasional trouble and frequent complaints. Among the latter, George Downing, knight of the spoon and lord of the bivalves of Broad street, was seriously aggrieved in this way, and made complaint of his troubles to Mayor Guthrie. His Honor could not exactly see how his jurisdiction extended over Jersey City, where they have a very good Mayor, but, being of a kind and benevolent disposition, and assuming that justice be done, though the lawyers should fail, very considerably recommended George to make application to Supervisor Hunt, Chairman of the Volunteering Committee. Thereupon Mr. Downing appeared before the Chairman and presented the following letter:—

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